

Cheer Spread Through Greece By Passage of Aid Measure

Hellenes Feel America Is Now With Them To End in Fight for Independence

By GEORGE WELLER.
Chicago Daily News Foreign Correspondent.
ATHENS, March 14.—The flash from America that President Roosevelt had signed a bill for aid to the Allies was read with joy in thousands of Greek homes, cafes and shops and spread its cheer quickly throughout the nation. To say it was received with wild jubilation would be to exaggerate, for the intense war effort leaves little energy over for relief of feelings.

The Greeks now seem to take it for granted that America's long arm has crossed the sea and planted a firm hand on their shoulders which will remain there as long as they fight for their independence. The Greek in the street, it is evident after a few conversations, is grateful to the United States without being a suppliant. Greece will accept and use to the full every shell and cannon, every airplane and machine gun that America sends her and, if one Greek dies, the Greeks say quietly and without bravado, there are plenty of Greeks ready to die for it.

But there is no apparent effort to persuade such liaison men as foreign correspondents to plead for more aid. The public and official attitudes seem to be identical. Let the United States assume as much of the burden of our defense as America considers morally and politically her own and no more. If the Americans are ready to spend for Greece's liberty, runs the popular Hellenic attitude, there are plenty of Greeks ready to die for it.

Decision Left Up to U. S.
Whether Greece's war is a self-defense is America's war is a political question which the Greeks seem to agree that Washington has decided, and should continue to decide, in the light of American interest only.

Word of the lease-lend bill's signature reached the writer while en route from Belgrade to Athens by a tortuous train journey requiring nearly four days. The final 19-hour stretch from Salonika to Athens was in a first-class compartment designed for six passengers and occupied by two Thracian farmers' families, an airman, a federal trooper, four children, mountains of luggage, baskets of slaughtered chickens, bread, eggs and oranges, the whole buttressed by aisles and lavatories completely and impossibly filled with hand baggage.

Except for the two men in uniform all were third-class ticketholders, but the aisles and doorways were so packed that the conductor, finding them in a first-class section, could only curse them at a distance and receive the calm peasant answer: "It's wartime, mister conductor." All were cheerful, patient, co-operative and extremely conversational; the writer's modern Greek quickly lost the patina of five years' disguise and began to acquire fluency, if not polish.

Meadows Full of Bombs.
The earthquake-shattered city of Larissa was seen from the train. About one house in 10 had fallen in and about half were cracked or weakened. An officer's wife, who boarded at this point, said the five Italian planes which bombed the environs after the tremor, all of which were shot down, scattered their bombs widely in the fields, falling by a miracle to strike a single occupied house.

"The meadows are full of bombs," she said, and the eyes of the Thracian farmer sparkled with interest. Across the Vardar marshes and when passing Olympus, the trackworkers threw down their picks and yelled at the passengers:

"We want the news, throw us your papers."

The last Salonika newspapers, predicting approval of the American lease-lend bill, were gone by the time the train began climbing into the Beotian Mountains dominated by Parnassus.

When it reached the railhead for Delphi the omen was suddenly fulfilled, and for the afternoon papers brought up from Athens by auto bus were available. By now it was pitch dark, the conductors had gone the length of the train ordering all curtains drawn, and only a single blue-painted bulb made barely discernible in the crammed and airless compartment.

Questioned on U. S. Aid.
Conversation, however, was incessant. A farmer from Siderokastro, holding the single newspaper sheet almost to the ceiling to catch the bulb's ghostly illumination, read aloud:

"Roosevelt signs the bill for aid to Greece."

At first there was only thoughtful silence and then the man with all the pockets of his vest filled with hard-boiled eggs, observed:

"American help is a good thing for us."

The passengers closely questioned the Greek airman as to whether any American planes had yet been flown in Albania, but he refused to answer. At first the passengers were indignant because, for the Greeks, the essence of a popular war is that every one has a right to know everything about it, including high strategy.

"We know all about there being Germans in Bulgaria; why should you not tell us whether there are American planes in Greece?" The airman shook his head and folded his lips stubbornly. When the passengers grew more heated the federal trooper intervened.

"Don't go prying after military secrets," he said. "America's help is on the way. Let that be enough for you."

Forgetting the airman, the passengers began guessing what kind of a system was hidden behind Roosevelt's secrecy upon the nature

of American aid, and they were still discussing the bill when the humming of plane motors outside the closed compartments informed them that they were approaching Athens. (Copyright, 1941, Chicago Daily News, Inc.)

Hot Water Shortage

STRASBOURG (AP).—Because of strict rationing of heating materials in Alsace only cold water gushes from most hot-water taps. Hospitals, restaurants, meat markets and some factories may have hot water. A barber shop is limited to one hot-water faucet.

London Concerned Over Interception Of French Ship

View Held That Darlan May Convoys Vessels, Precipitating Clash

By HELEN KIRKPATRICK.
Chicago Daily News Foreign Correspondent.
LONDON, March 14.—An Algerian report that British warships intercepted a 1,500-ton French merchantman and escorted it to Gibraltar gave officials here cause for concern yesterday, lest Vichy's Vice Premier Admiral Jean Darlan carry out his Monday threat to provide naval convoys for all French ships. The view is strongly held in some

quarters here that Admiral Darlan's threat was inspired by the German desire to bring the French and British into open warfare. The admiral, who is navy minister and head of the fleet, threatened to convoy all French ships unless the British abandoned their blockade of France and allowed ships to pass freely through the British lines.

The British are most reluctant to clash with the French and as a result they are now faced with a nasty dilemma. If they do not maintain the blockade the war obviously will be greatly prolonged. If they do, they will risk battle with the remnants of the French fleet. And that, in their view, is exactly what the Germans want to happen. They are beginning to wonder if Admiral Darlan is not a willing or unintentional tool of Hitler.

It is suggested here that the Germans inspired Admiral Darlan to threaten on the grounds that the French must be fed, in hopes that the British, with American persua-

sion, would back down and allow French ships to pass. Those ships could then carry oil and fats, which the Germans want, as well as food for the French.

While the British are more than willing to accept a plan whereby unoccupied France could be fed, they say they must have guarantees that the food will actually reach the French. But under no circumstances could they give blanket permission for the French to go through the blockade without examination to see that the ships are actually carrying food and not oil or metal alloys, which Germany needs.

Whether a clash can be averted probably depends on whether the United States and the Vichy government reach a satisfactory agreement on the shipment of foods to France before Admiral Darlan is forced to make good his threat. (Copyright, 1941, Chicago Daily News, Inc.)

Mexico is to hold a convention on industrial law.

Canada Finally Places Bananas on Tariff List

By the Associated Press.
OTTAWA, Canada.—That slippery fruit, the banana, eluded for a while the grim restrictions recently placed by Canada on luxuries imported from abroad, but not for long. Its importation from countries outside the British Commonwealth has now been prohibited, except under special permit. But no banana can complain it was not banned with dignity. The deed was done in the following official language:

Whereas the Minister of Finance

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reports that it is in the public interest that the importation of bananas from countries within the sterling area should be encouraged as far as possible by prohibiting the importation of bananas from countries outside the sterling area, except under permit; and

"That in order to provide for the prohibition of the importation of bananas as aforesaid it is desirable to amend part 2 of schedule 1 as hereinafter provided."

"Now, therefore, his excellency the Governor General in council, on the recommendation of the Minister of Finance and under and by

virtue of the War Measures Act, is pleased to add and doth hereby add to part 2 of schedule 1 of the War Exchange Conservation Act, 1940, the following:

"Tariff item No. 98 *** bananas."

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